



## **Representative Eric Pettigrew**

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Law (Vice Chair)

Children & Family Services

Trade & Economic Develop-  
ment



# Summer

# 2003

## **A Report to the 37th District**

Dear Neighbor,

It's been a tough legislative session, but I'm pleased to say that we accomplished a lot in Olympia this year.

Some of our achievements for the 2003 session include:

- Passing a transportation plan to boost our economy and get us out of gridlock.
- Approving bills to promote economic development and keep Boeing jobs in our state.
- Funding local arts and cultural projects to create jobs and enhance our community.
- Expanding state efforts to help kinship care families.
- Passing a prescription drug bill that will help our community's senior citizens.

Unfortunately, our economic troubles left us with few attractive options in crafting a two-year budget. We fought hard in the House for a spending plan that maintained our commitments to schools, human services, and health care, and we succeeded in many respects – preserving spaces in the Basic Health Plan and retaining health care coverage for low-income children and prenatal care services for pregnant mothers.

Inside I'll describe more of what happened this session. As always, I welcome your comments about the budget or any other issues facing our state. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you in Olympia.

Sincerely,

Representative Eric Pettigrew

### **INSIDE:**

- **A DISAPPOINTING BUDGET**
- **VICTORIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY**
- **REMEMBERING JAPANESE INTERNMENT**
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## A DISAPPOINTING BUDGET

With a budget deficit of \$2.7 billion, this was sure to be a difficult session in Olympia. Some cuts were necessary, but I wanted to solve this budget crisis through a combination of cuts and revenue increases, so that we could protect our most important programs. Unfortunately, a majority of the legislature was unwilling to vote for any tax increases. In the end, I voted against the budget because it did not do enough to meet the needs of our schools, teachers, low-income children & families, the elderly, and those who take care of our vulnerable neighbors.

This year's budget exercise is a reminder of the need for a more progressive tax system in Washington. Too many low-income families are contributing an undue share of their incomes to state taxes- families already hit hard by a struggling economy. This summer I will be working with a bipartisan group of legislators to find ways to make our tax system fairer and more progressive, and to ensure that we have the funds we need to support vital state programs.



## A TRANSPORTATION PLAN TO GET OUR STATE MOVING AGAIN

In order to get motorists and our economy moving again, we knew that we needed to make greater investments in our transportation system, including transit and roads. We started out this session by enacting a package of accountability reforms to ensure transportation projects are carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible, and moved quickly to tackle the traffic problems that contribute to our stalled economy, endanger motorists and pedestrians, and impact our quality of life.

The transportation plan we passed includes a number of critical safety and mobility investments that will benefit our community:

- \$100 million in transit service for seniors and the disabled.
- \$183 million for passenger rail service across the state.
- \$30 million for vanpool programs.
- Over \$300 million worth of improvements to the Viaduct, I-5, and I-90 in the Central Puget Sound region.



## LOWERING THE COST OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Bringing down prescription drug costs was one of my top priorities in Olympia, and I'm pleased that we finally passed a plan to help hundreds of thousands of our citizens-especially our seniors-obtain more affordable prescription drugs.

Our plan allows for bulk buying of drugs to save money, adopts a preferred drug list based on the best medical evidence available, and will save seniors and our state government millions of dollars every year without compromising the quality of our health care.

# A Report to the 37th District

## VICTORIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

### INVESTMENTS IN THE ARTS, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS

In our state construction budget, we made some important new investments that will create jobs, strengthen our community, and enhance our local arts scene. The budget includes funding for the following projects in the 37th Legislative District:

- \$1.5 million to help purchase a new museum facility in the International District for the Wing Luke Asian Museum. The new facility is expected to attract 100,000 visitors annually, create 200 new jobs, and increase business at more than 5,000 neighboring stores, restaurants and other establishments.
- \$700,000 to fund an expansion of the Pratt Fine Arts Center.
- \$400,000 for a new facility to house the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Home Center. The center provides early childhood education for 45 low-income children and their families in the Central District in Seattle.
- \$346,000 to fund a community center for the Eritrean Association.
- \$300,000 for creation of the Urban League Village at Colman School. The facility will house affordable rental apartments, an African-American heritage museum, and commercial office space.
- \$300,000 to assist in the construction of the Tashiro-Kaplan Building in downtown Seattle. The project will provide 50 units of low-income housing for artists and their families.
- \$110,000 for the Columbia City Gallery.
- \$60,000 for Neighborhood House's Rainier Vista Center, a multi-service center housing two HeadStart classrooms, community meeting rooms and an indoor play area.



### MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

I worked hard to secure \$80 million in our state's capital budget for the development of more units of affordable housing. This money will be matched by federal and private grants, so that the actual investment in affordable housing will be hundreds of millions of dollars over the next two years. This money will not only provide housing for many needy families in our community, it will also create thousands of badly needed construction jobs all over our state.

### SAVING BRANCH VILLA

In November the state moved to close the Branch Villa Health Care Center because of financial problems. This would have displaced many seniors who have lived in the Central Area their whole lives, and would have cost dozens of employees their jobs. Along with community members who spent countless hours fighting to save Branch Villa, I worked to prevent the closure, find a new owner, and get Branch Villa back on its feet.

I'm proud to report that we have now found a new owner, the Opportunities Industrialization Center, a highly respected nonprofit that will continue to care for our community's seniors at the now renamed Leon Sullivan Health Care Center at Branch Villa. This was a big win for our community, and it would not have been possible without the efforts of all the community members who got involved.



## REMEMBERING JAPANESE INTERMENT

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 authorizing the military to “remove (from society) any person considered a danger.” One month later, the Army began rounding up Japanese Americans beginning with nearly 300 men, women and children on Bainbridge Island. By June 1942 more than 110,000 Japanese Americans had been forced from their homes and into temporary assembly centers including over 13,000 Washington state residents. Two-thirds of these individuals were American citizens.

To remember this tragedy, and help ensure that nothing like it ever happens again, I introduced House Bill 1460, establishing February 19 as Civil Liberties Day of Remembrance in Washington state. I am proud to report that this bill passed the House and the Senate unanimously. My hope is that February 19 will now become a great opportunity for state residents to reflect on and recommit to protecting civil liberties by remembering the experience of Japanese Americans during WWII.

## STRENGTHENING KINSHIP CARE FAMILIES

My proudest accomplishment this session was the enactment of legislation I introduced to increase efforts by the state to keep children placed in foster care with their families.

The legislation (HB 1233):

- Requires the Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) to develop a protocol for searching for kinship caregivers when children are referred to DSHS.
- Establishes at least one pilot program in eastern Washington and one pilot program in western Washington to help kinship caregivers navigate through available resources.
- Sets up an oversight committee to monitor and guide DSHS policymaking for kinship care families.

More than 32,000 children in Washington are currently in such kinship care placements, and the state will now do a better job of serving them. I'd like to thank the members of the Kinship Care Workgroup for helping these efforts come to fruition.

P.S. As a way of saying thank you to the dedicated members of the Kinship Care Workgroup, I will be serving as Santa Claus at this year's workgroup holiday party, so don't miss it!

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